## *State of Louisiana*
DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATION

### OFFICE OF STATE UNIFORM PAYROLL

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**GOVERNOR**

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**COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATION**

August 5, 1999

OFFICE OF STATE UNIFORM PAYROLL MEMORANDUM #00-03

TO:   All UPS Agencies
     Payroll and Human Resource Offices

FROM:  Ronald S. Mitchell
     Director

SUBJECT: Employee Names in UPS

OSUP completed the conversion of the employee name field in UPS from one field to four separate fields during February 1999. During review of the Name Conversion Audit Report (BL1707-01), dated 2/23/99, several agencies responded with questions regarding how employee names should be entered into each field on the Basic Data Screens (BL14M201 and BL14M211) and questions regarding the purpose of the recent changes. This memo is being issued to clarify and provide further guidance in regard to the name conversion changes.

## WHY THE CONVERSION? (See OSUP Memo #98-28 for more details)

1. **The Social Security Administration (SSA)**
   **SSA can assess a $50 penalty on any incorrect Form W-2.** SSA has decided to enforce this penalty for incorrect employee names reported on Forms W-2 in upcoming years. Making sure names and Social Security numbers reported on Forms W-2 match SSA's records is important because unmatched records can result in additional processing costs for your agency and uncredited earnings for the affected employees. Uncredited earnings can affect future eligibility (and amounts paid) under SSA's retirement, disability, and survivors program.

   By Tax Year 2000, the Forms W-2 will be submitted by OSUP under a new format called "MMREF" which requires that employee names be separated into the four fields. Forms W-2 are sent to SSA by OSUP at year end. To help prevent penalties, SSA offers employers the Enumeration Verification System (EVS) to verify employee names prior to the filing of Forms W-2.

2. **Department of Social Services (DSS)**
   OSUP is currently complying with the New Hire Reporting laws by submitting a paper copy of all new hires each pay period to DSS. In the near future, this report will be submitted through electronic or magnetic media that also requires a specific layout of employee names.

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**WHAT CAN AGENCIES DO?** (See OSUP Memos #98-28, #99-06, & #99-20 for more details)

1. OSUP encourages agencies to **request the employee's Social Security card** to ensure that the employee's name in UPS matches the name on the SS card, <u>regardless of punctuation</u>. There are specific guidelines to follow for punctuation, see section titled "How Should Employee Names Be Entered Into UPS?"

2. OSUP will submit all employee names to SSA via EVS for a preliminary matching after the second payroll in August. The **Social Security Verification Report** (BL1523-01) will then be produced for all names that are rejected by SSA. Agency personnel must review this report **and all names must be corrected prior to the filing of Forms W-2.**

   NOTE: Agencies should enter a name as it appears on the SS card. Due to SSA's processing, EVS may not reject all incorrect names. In other words, a name that does not reject by EVS could still be rejected from the Form W-2. The SS card is the agency's best documentation to ensure correct names are submitted on W-2s.

3. Agency personnel should **advise employees to notify SSA of any name changes and provide the agency payroll/personnel office** with the new SS card. If a name has changed, continue to use the old name until the employee has obtained a new SS card with the new name. *Using a new name without updating SS's records may prevent posting of earnings.*

4. Agency personnel can call SSA's EVS toll free hotline **(800-772-6270)** or SSA's general toll free number **(800-772-1213) to verify up to 5 names/SSNs** at a time**.**

5. Agency personnel can also **submit a written request to verify up to 50 names/SSNs** by mail or fax, if available, through the agency's local SSA Office.

6. Agency personnel can **remind employees to compare their name** on their SS card to their name as printed on the envelope of their check or earnings statement.

## HOW SHOULD EMPLOYEE NAMES BE ENTERED INTO UPS?

Below are some guidelines and examples that should be followed when entering/changing an employee's name in UPS.

| | | **FIRST** | **MIDDLE** | **LAST** | **SUF** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *1.* | *Join compound names with a hyphen.* | **BETTY-JO** | ANNE | **SMITH-JONES** | |

If, after contacting the employee, you are unable to determine which two names belong to which single field, contact OSUP.

| | | **FIRST** | **MIDDLE** | **LAST** | **SUF** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *2.* | *Join multi-letter prefixes with a hyphen.* | **LA-SHONDA** | ASHLEY | **ST-ROMAIN** | |

Certain prefixes are known as "exceptions to the rule" and are accepted by SSA without a hyphen. However, to ensure accurate reading by SSA, it is best to assume there are no exceptions.

| | | **FIRST** | **MIDDLE** | **LAST** | **SUF** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *3.* | *Combine single-letter prefixes with the following name.* | **DWANNA** | CONRAD | **ONEIL** | JR |

| | | **FIRST** | **MIDDLE** | **LAST** | **SUF** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **4.** | **Only use suffixes that appear on the SS card. (Jr, Sr, III, etc) (Not MD, RN, PhD, CPA, etc)** | RICHARD | WAYNE | WILLIAMS | **JR** |
| **5.** | **Do not use periods.** | **TJ** | **M** | KELLY | |
| **6.** | **Do not enter titles (Mr., Mrs., Dr., etc).** | | | | |

Anything added to an employee's name in UPS other than what is on the SS card will not match SSA's records, and the computers may interpret the added information as part of the employee's name.  At the very least, this will require extra processing time to validate the name.  However, if SSA is ultimately unable to verify the name, the W-2 will reject, the employees earnings will not be posted, and penalties will be imposed upon the employer.

**The information contained in this memorandum should be shared with both Payroll and Human Resource Offices**.  The material was obtained from the Social Security Administration's Web site (www.ssa.gov).  Feel free to browse the site for more pertinent information regarding employee name format.

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the User Services Unit at (225):

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Karen Antoine | 342-5354 | Stacey Guilbeau | 342-5377 |
| Debbie Causey | 342-5950 | Paula Rotolo | 342-5357 |
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RSM:DCC:mmh